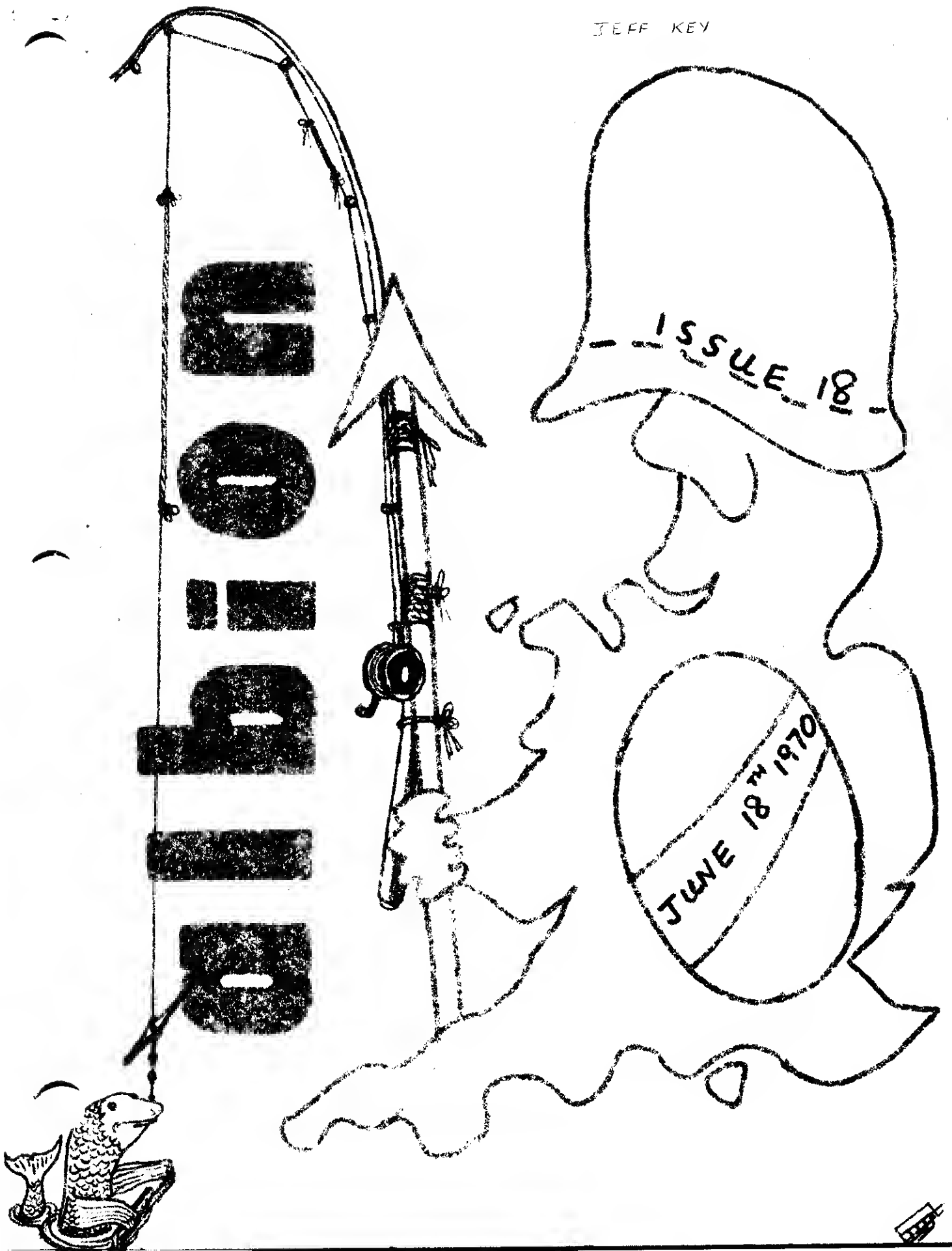


JEFF KEY



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Number 18.

A L B I O N

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ALBION is a journal of postal Diplomacy, gradually expanding its frontiers to cover more and more items of general war-gaming interest. It is edited and published by Don Turnbull, now established in the largest room at 6 St. George's Avenue, Timperley, Cheshire, England. I wish people would stop hanging coats on Diplomacy boards, though.

Game fees for ALBION games are announced at the start of such games. Current vacancies are listed on page 18 of issue 17. Applications welcome.

Subscriptions to ALBION are currently 2/- per copy (British Isles and Ireland), 50 cents per copy (U.S.A.), and pro rata elsewhere. Both figures include postage.

All-for-all trade with other Diplomacy magazines is restricted to those appearing on the trades list. We hope that this situation will expand in the future.

ALBION exists primarily to record the progress of postal Diplomacy games taking place within the British Region of AHIKS, or within the geographical ~~area~~ covered by the Region, AHIKS membership notwithstanding. As from issue 17, ALBION also records the progress of international Diplomacy games; the new game, ALBION 70/3, is such a game, and we hope to make others available in the future. The supply of games will become a function of the demand, of course.

International games are reported in alternate issues (which is why you won't find a report on 70/3 this time). Games taking place wholly within the British Isles are reported each issue.

ALBION is a member of the Diplomacy Division of the NFFF Games Bureau (Chairman - Don Miller; Division Chief - Rod Walker).

Diplomacy is a game manufactured and marketed by Games Research Inc., 48 Wareham Street, Boston, Mass. 02118, U.S.A. I gather that the game is available from most large toy and sports shops in the British Isles now, although if you have any difficulty in obtaining a copy, I can help.

Cartoon at rear by Malcolm Watson.

Cover design and execution undecided at the time of printing this page. You will get a surprise in this respect either this issue or next.

XX

ALBION has now been published for close on a year. How it has lasted so long is completely beyond me. However, please excuse me while the office staff go out to ~~get~~ ~~ALBION~~ celebrate.

I was first introduced to the Avalon Hill Intercontinental Kriegspiel Society by Ken Norris, who was at that time director of the British Region, and now is an Honorary Life Member of the Society. Ken's methods of welcoming a new member to the Society are, to say the least, unorthodox, since his first steps are to thrash the newcomer at any game suggested by the latter (one might remark that this quality is not shared by the present British Regional Director, who gets consistently hammered by new members). I have yet to find a game at which Ken didn't beat me with ease, and although you might say that any fool can beat me, Ken's postal wargames record is indisputably second to none, and this against the best players of AHIKS or Avalon Hill themselves. Some time ago, the Avalon Hill Company endeavoured to introduce an 'automatic victory' rule, whereby zones of control were ignored if 7-1 odds or more could be produced against a defender. To test the idea, a select panel from Avalon Hill played German against Ken Norris as Russian, using the automatic victory rule. In this match, Ken represented AHIKS. The game - Stalingrad. Ken won, of course. I don't suppose it was quite as easy a win as he usually gets against me, or other players, but he won, nevertheless, and AH attributed this to his extreme shrewdness of placement of the Russian units. I don't think there is anyone better qualified to talk about Stalingrad. We have seen other good articles on this game - Dick Holcombe's recent article in the Kommandeur, for instance. However we have great pleasure in being able to reprint the best, in our opinion, article on this subject.

THOUGHTS ON STALINGRAD by KEN NORRIS.

(Originally printed in Strategy and Tactics volume II number 3, and reprinted here by kind permission of the author).

There are three basically different approaches to the Avalon Hill game of Stalingrad, each having certain characteristics which can usually be recognised.

First, of course, is the beginner. In his game we usually find the Panzer Corps making deep thrusts and wide sweeps into the heart of Russia on the one hand, and the Russians massing for huge counter-attacks on the other. It is a fast-moving game with the casualties mounting swiftly. The very novelty of the game is one of its great attractions. Towards the end of this period, but before the novelty has worn off, it is quite usual to find the player concerned writing to The General or Strategy and Tactics, setting out, in great detail, either a perfect Russian defence or an equally perfect German Offensive Plan.

With the passing of this first phase we find developing the rather more cynical attitude of the experienced player who has seen it all before. No longer are there any 'perfect plans' to interest him; instead, this is more a period of experimentation. The questions that concern him now are such things as 'is it

better to soak off at 1-5 or 1-2?' - 'are 16 factors to 12 better than a straight 1-1?'. After a time he is convinced that there is no future in the game as the Russians are obviously too strong to be beaten; and yet there is something about Stalingrad that won't let go, so once again our gallant player sits down to write to the magazines.

This time he has finally discovered the secret; it is that the Avalon Hill Company have messed it all up, and by just a few small changes in the rules our hero is able to put life back into the game. More often than not it is the same rule changes that are proposed too - away with historical accuracy: (i) reduce the Russian replacement rate, (ii) bring in the automatic elimination rule, (iii) introduce the Luftwaffe.

Just before we move on to the third phase, let us have a look at some of these rule changes in greater detail; because some of them do have much to commend them. However, the reduction of the Russian replacement rate is not one of them - it has nothing at all in its favour. Historically it is completely inaccurate, and in any case its effect on the game is practically nil at the time when it would be of most use - that is, during the first 8 or 10 moves. If you really must play about with replacement rules, you will find it far better just to double the German replacement rate.

The automatic elimination rule, as introduced in Afrika Korps (not as in Blitzkrieg). This rule does not make a great change to the game when played at a medium level, but, although you may get a glimpse of the rolling Steppes stretching out before the Panzers, you will soon find that all you have done is to increase the importance of the river line to such an extent that the game is closed right up again. Playing at a more advanced level, it cannot be altogether without significance that when the Avalon Hill Company (as Germans) played an experimental game with the automatic elimination rule against AHIKS (as Russians) the Germans were only able to make use of the rule once during the entire game. Mr. Tom Shaw of Avalon Hill attributed this - very generously - to 'astute' play by AHIKS.

The introduction of air power. This of course requires a considerable amount of work before it can be brought into the game of Stalingrad. It can be very good fun when done correctly, but it really isn't the same game any more, because the scale of the Avalon Hill game is just not suitable for the introduction of Air Factors.

None of these rule changes really help the game because they are really designed, not to improve the game, but to improve the Germans' chances. Any proposed rule change to improve the game must be a two-edged sword; that is, it must be one that both sides can make use of. So if you really think there is something wrong with Stalingrad, I suggest you read a few books about the campaign, and then copy what really happened. And in the 'snow' months, freeze ALL the rivers. Try it, and see.

Finally, we come to the third type of approach to the game. This is the player who has either had the good fortune to be able to clear away all the cobwebs and see Stalingrad as about the very best example of pure wargaming, or, for want of a better word, the pure fanatic. Of course, if you reach this stage in Stalingrad, you will probably be a first-class all-round player of most games of this type anyway. But there is a lot more to Stalingrad than at first appears, provided (and I stress this point) provided you want to play a good hard game all the way through. It is no use looking for a quick victory; it just isn't there. Go back to the real Barbarossa for a moment, and you will be surprised how very much alike the real war in Russia and the Stalingrad game turn out to be. I don't know the names of the people who designed the Stalingrad game,* but I think they did a far better job in this game than has been done in anything else that Avalon Hill has produced.**

(*Now revealed, in S&T volume II number 6 as Lindsley Schutz and Tom Shaw. djt).

(** originally written before the appearance of Jutland, 1914, Anzio and Kriegspiel; however, knowing Ken's views, I doubt if he has changed his mind since. djt)

Hitler started the Russian campaign with the idea of getting a quick result. By December of 1941 it was obvious that the idea was a failure. Even so, it wasn't until the Zitadelle battle of July 1943 that the Germans were finally beaten - Stalingrad debacle or not.

Now if your opponent is a player of your own calibre, and you try for a quick victory, you will very soon find that you are not as good as Hitler. Barring freak dice, you cannot get quick results. You must plan your game so that you are going to win it in or around the 24th move. Once you have grasped this most essential point, you will find yourself thinking of the Stalingrad game as a study in Strategy as well as Tactics, and once you have reached that stage of gamesmanship you will probably find yourself enjoying wargaming very much more. There are two main causes of complaint against the game of Stalingrad; first, that it is too easy for the Russians; second, it is too close a game - too much of a slogging match rather than a game in which hard thinking will pay off. Let us examine these two points carefully.

'Too easy for the Russians.' Is it? The Russians start the game with 220 defence factors and the Germans with 247 attack factors. Now even if the Russians never lost a single unit but saved up all their replacement factors right through to the end of the game (and if they didn't lose a replacement city, that would mean 438 replacement factors) they could not at any time have more than 220 defence factors on the board. Right away we see that what we really mean is that it is too hard for the Germans. But the Germans outnumber the Russians, so we must go a step further, and then we can formulate the first golden rule of the Stalingrad game.

'The Germans cannot afford to lose units.'

This does not mean that the Germans must never risk losses, of course, but what it does mean is that every effort must be made to attack at 5-1 or better, and to soak off with the least possible factors. Make no mistake about it - one battle at 5-1 is better than two battles at 3-1. In the 5-1 the Germans must gain ground without loss; in the two 3-1 battles they must gain ground all right, but they cannot afford the losses under normal circumstances.

As for the 'slogging match versus the hard thinking'; the Russians have 158 attack factors against the Germans' 265 defence factors, so there is not going to be too much slogging from the Russians. As for the hard thinking, picture the start of the game; the Russians are in position: the Germans now have to decide not only their distribution of concentrations, but which units on which squares to attack and, just as important, which squares to attack from. One of the important points which is often ignored, is the fact that the Germans are always on the move in front of the Russians as far as the weather is concerned, and the correct positioning of the Germans can not only allow a quick switch of the main point of attack from, for example, the south to the north side of the Marshes, but can also attract Russian units to where the Germans want them for the following move.

What are the Strategic questions that the Germans must decide? Well, they are fairly straightforward.

First, Finland. The initial German dispositions here must depend on the Russian line-up. If there appears to be the slightest chance of infiltration, then this is the place for a couple of Panzer Corps because if they can get loose behind the Russian lines their very existence will be a source of worry to the Russians and a drain on their resources. More often than not, of course, there is no chance of evading the Russians, so it becomes a question of keeping as many Russian Corps as possible tied up for as long as possible. If you think you can spare it, you could do worse than let the 6R Panzer Corps sit the war out in Helsinki.

In the central area between Konigsberg and Hungary is the obvious place to concentrate the Germans and, after the first few months when Brest has fallen or been outflanked, the Panzers must be concentrated in the area with a clear target set for them. Move them around within the area by all means - north of the marshes this turn, and south of the marshes next turn - but make sure that they cannot be caught on the wrong foot by bad weather. Keep the Russians guessing as to the main point of the attack, but, once you have fixed your target in your mind, don't be side-tracked.

Which should be the chief target for the Germans? Moscow, Leningrad or Stalingrad? Well, let's forget about Stalingrad right away because (1) it's too far away, and (2) it is much easier to attack it from the North and North-West rather than from the West. Of course, the Russian might invite you to go that way; he might mass his troops behind the Nemunas and

leave the weaker units to, not defend, but delay an advance in the South. Does it matter? Any successful advance on Stalingrad must either capture Kiev, or leave a lot of German units tied up in defence, and even a quick capture of Kiev doesn't really matter all that much, because it is still further from Kiev to Moscow or Stalingrad than from Kaunas to Leningrad.

No, Moscow or Leningrad should be the first German target, and Leningrad looks the better bet every time, although we can always keep Moscow in mind as a target of opportunity.

Why Leningrad? Well, there are three good reasons. 1. It keeps the German line short - and we are back again to the economy of German units. 2. Once captured, Leningrad gives the opportunity of outflanking Moscow from the whole of the Northern area, or will at least tie down a lot of Russian units if they try to form a defence line. 3. An advance on Moscow rather than Leningrad makes a dangerous salient.

What about Rumania? Here the Germans are on interior lines, so it is worth putting half a dozen or so Corps down here in order to force the Russians to do the same.

No doubt all the experts will have given up by now, but just in case there are still some beginners reading this, here are some Tactical suggestions that might be found useful. Did I say Tactical? Well, they are Strategic too, and this magazine covers both.

For the Russians.

1. Never place a weak unit in the next, or next-but-one square to a square you want to hold, at least not if the Germans can reach a square that is adjacent to both. For example (using the official Avalon Hill grid) if you want to hold Minsk, it is no good putting a weak unit at V22, because the Germans could kill the weak unit from W21 and soak off against Minsk from X20, leaving their forces adjacent to the city at the end of their turn, making you move out or counter-attack.

2. Never double up a very strong unit with a very weak one. For example, if attacking a 7-10-4 at S18 from the three squares S17, T17, T18, the Germans would have to attack with 60 factors to be sure of winning the battle, and would risk the loss of 20 of these factors. But if you put a 2-3-6 with the 7-10-4, although you have in theory increased the defence factors from 20 to 26, the Germans could then be sure of winning by attacking the stronger unit at 1-5, with 4 factors, while automatically eliminating the weaker unit at 7-1. This would leave them astride the river at the end of their turn, forcing the Russians to retreat or counter-attack, and all for the maximum risk of 4 factors.

3. From September to March, always assume that the weather for the following month is going to be bad, and make sure you have replacements on their way to the required position just in case it is too far to reach in one move.

4. Don't attack unless it is really necessary. There is nothing that exasperates the Germans more than to see the Russians continually pulling back the absolute minimum without ever attacking.
5. When taking replacements, make first call on your Light Armoured Corps. In a straight line with 2 squares in between each, they can form a complete block over a length of 9 squares.
6. You only have two 7-10-4s. Keep them fairly close together. The best positions for them are S18 and V19; R24 and S25; and possibly L30 and M30. As for the 6-9-6 - leave it in (i) Minsk; (ii) Smolensk; or even (iii) Kiev, as long as possible, even if it is eliminated through isolation.
7. Try to build up some replacement credit. Once you have done so, don't take the replacements unless you really have to. Once the German knows that there are 5 or 6 5-7-4s just sitting back waiting, he will be very reluctant to leave just Rumanian units to hold his defence lines. It is the threat that will bother him, not the actual units.
8. Eliminate all the Germans and Finns in Finland as soon as possible, and - other things being equal - do it by making a bee-line for Helsinki. If you are involved in any exchanges up there, eliminate some of your Armoured Corps as you will want some fast-moving replacements in the South during the winter.
9. Many of the river lines which run through cities can best be defended from behind the city rather than in it. For example, the mouth of the Divina is best held from P23 rather than Riga, as P23 can be attacked from only two squares but Riga can be hit from three, and, if captured, Riga will be occupied which would put the Germans across the river next turn.
10. Try to make the Germans extend their lines, and try to keep them extended. If they get across a river with a spearhead, don't draw back all along the line, but let the salient go deeper but not wider. Not only will this tie up Germans on the flanks of the salient but it will often stop them making a rapid transfer from one point of attack to another.
11. Don't try to kill Germans. Let them kill themselves attacking you.
12. If you ever find yourself attacking at odds of 2-1, run - do not walk - to the nearest bridge, hand over your commission, get up on the parapet, and - JUMP!

For the Germans.

1. Remember - every unit you lose is a nail in your coffin.
2. If you are going to attack, try to make it at least 5-1, and if you are going to soak off, why risk 3 factors if 2 will do?
3. The Russians cannot form a continuous defence line (doubled) in the West, you can outflank the Bug through the Lwow gap, and you can outflank the Nemunas through the marshes.

4. If you are attacking and risking an exchange, say against Brest, S18 or V19, make sure that the units you are prepared to lose in the exchange do not all come from the same square of attack.
5. If you are able to advance after combat, and you have been attacking from 2 or more squares, don't advance all the units from one square, but leave each of the attacking squares occupied (except for the middle one of three). And if you can advance after combat, make sure you are not moving into an exposed position which is liable, or likely, to be counter-attacked.
6. As soon as opportunity allows, start pushing 2 or 3 Infantry Corps due East through the middle of the Pripyat marshes. You may find that you are outflanking Minsk and the Russians to the South, and you will be surprised how effective this can be. You might also find it informative to note how many Russian units pass through Z22 by train during a game's early stages, especially if you are keeping him guessing by switching your forces north and south of the marshes.
7. Pick your main target and don't be side-tracked. Keep your Panzers concentrated as you don't have enough for two all-out attacks.
8. In an attack in which you are risking an exchange, don't be afraid to give up a Panzer Corps if you can get it back quickly as a replacement. In an exchange against a Russian 5-7-4 it is better to lose a 7-7-6 than two 4-4-4s.
9. Keep the Rumanians spread out behind the front along the whole length of the line so that they will be available for soak offs, but don't put them in the front line, because the Russians can attack them at 5-1 without much trouble, probably soaking off against any other Germans on the square. Although it will not mean a big victory for the Russians, it will mean that the German advance will be held back for the following month.
10. You will often find that the Russian Light Armoured Corps keep getting under your feet when you are out in the open. They are easy to kill off - all you need is 21 factors. But don't just kill them because they are there - try attacking at 5-1 now and again. You are bound to win without loss, and if you drive them back instead of eliminating them it will mean that they will not be available as replacements for the Russians next turn, perhaps in a totally different sector of the front. It will also mean that the Russians will have to use up their replacement capacity at a quicker rate just to recover the same number of units to block a given length of front.
11. Always remember that the Russians will never be any stronger than they are at the start of the game, so, kill them if you can, of course, but always keep in mind the fact that it is more important to gain ground than to fight.

12. The game is scheduled for 24 moves, so don't try to finish it in 12 or less. As long as your German losses have been kept fairly low, you can expect to be within striking distance of the major Russian cities by mid-1942, and still be able to win.

13. See '12' for the Russians.

Ken Norris.

I repeat - I am particularly grateful to Ken for his permission to reprint this article in these pages. I hope it will be the first in a series of articles in ALBION, in line with the new policy of slow (but sure) expansion into general wargaming topics.

As with any article, there are always the critics, although I know of only one in the case of 'Thoughts on Stalingrad' - Carl Knabe II. Carl wrote to S&T in the issue after the above was published, and stated, amongst other things, that some statements in the article 'illustrate complete inexperience with really excellent Russian play.' (In all fairness to Mr. Knabe, I should add that Chris Wagner, then the editor of S&T, cites him as a member of the 'best three' Avalon Hill players around, a category into which Chris had also put Ken when the article was printed.) Chris suggested that Ken and Carl should play a Stalingrad game, an account of which was to be published in S&T. However this has not, as far as I am aware, taken place, which perhaps is a pity.

If I may stick my neck out here, I would predict that, if such a match ever did take place, the unfortunate Mr. Knabe would stand a very good chance of eating his words. However the matter now seems academic.

Anyway - anyone who thinks Ken is wrong should try playing him, and don't blame me for wanting to print the result!

A Grand Revelation of ALBION Policy.

One or two people, already involved in ALBION Diplomacy games, have asked me just how many issues of ALBION will they get for paying the game fee and entering the game. My answer has always been - you get ALBION (paying postage only) for as long as you remain in the game. As soon as you leave the game for which you paid the game fee, you must subscribe to the magazine if you want to go on receiving it, unless of course you have already started another game and paid another game fee.

I had always thought this was quite a fair policy, and have never deemed it necessary to explain it. However, for every policy there is always a critic, and the present one recently came under fire from the suntanned person of Malcolm Watson, who, you will remember, was exiled from North of the Border for some heinous (but unfortunately unprintable) sin concerning his treatment of the pipes.

I am therefore compelled to explain my devious decision, as follows.

Most wargamers would agree that the game is to be played for the enjoyment gained from so doing. They would also agree that a postal game of virtually anything involves them in some expense. A Stalingrad set, for instance, which lasts 48 moves (24 moves per game, and assuming both games go on to the bitter end) costs each player 48x5d for stamps alone, which is £1. There is also the cost of envelopes, of paper, of typewriter ribbons etc. etc.

You might say that this isn't too much to spend indulging in a hobby, and I would agree with you. However, a Diplomacy game is perhaps in a slightly different category, since each player could, potentially, write to each other player, and to the gamesmaster, each move. Even assuming that the players are all in England, and that the game only lasts 12 game years (which is pretty short), this will cost each participant nearly five times as much as for our Stalingrad example, and that's not including the game fee or the odd retreat after the Spring moves.

Therefore, I feel that the winner of such a game - and, indeed, the survivors - should benefit in a small way from his skill, and the benefit, which is a monetary one really, should help him to recoup a small proportion of the cash he has spent on the game.

I'm not normally in favour of prizes, monetary or otherwise, for competitions within a hobby; to my mind this puts too much of a competitive slant on a hobby which is, as far as most players are concerned, non-competitive in all but the actual play. (I haven't put that very well, but you know what I mean). However these people who enter our Diplomacy games are the main reason this magazine keeps alive, and they provide the entertainment for the rest of the readers.

Therefore, by a long roundabout route, I come back to the argument that a player in a Diplomacy game should receive some benefit from the game, in proportion to the skill (or luck, as it sometimes happens) he has shown in the game. And what better way of doing this than by making his game fee, and hence his receipt of ALBION, terminate the instant he departs the game?

It will not have escaped your acute minds that the cheapest way, by far, of getting ALBION (short of trading, that is) is by entering a game, at the ridiculously low game fees we ask. At present, game fees cost 10/-, whereas to subscribe costs you 2/- per issue (more overseas). Therefore, to break even, you need only last $2\frac{1}{2}$ game years. In 69/1, when the player for England deserted his troops in battle, the last surviving unit (a forlorn A(Edi), as I recall) was not finally eliminated until issue 11.

You get the point, I hope? NOW - look at the game openings that still exist in ALBION.....

And, While We Are About It, Another Policy.

The ALBION policy of abbreviations of province names in the game of Diplomacy.

In a letter from Buddy Tretick recently, there appears the announcement:-

'LA GUERRE does not recognise the use of NTH as an abbreviation, since it could easily infer NORTH SEA, NORTH ATLANTIC or NORTH AFRICA.'

Also:-

'The use of TYO for Tyrrhenian Sea allows ambiguity for TYO or TYR in identifying Tyrolia.'

Buddy asks me to publish 'a brief discussion as to why ALBION prefers it's abbreviations, and LA GUERRE's reason for stating that.....(the above announcements).'

OK - here we go. The use of an abbreviation is merely for editorial convenience, in that it saves a lot of space. Agreed that ALBION wastes a lot of space, in wide margins for instance, but the fact remains. Now an abbreviation serves its function if it is recognised by the players and (but to a much less important degree) by non-playing readers. Thus if I were to adopt the policy of referring to Wales as 'Taff', this would be OK, by the strict functional letter of the unwritten Diplomacy law, providing the players recognised the term and were reminded of it from time to time (the latter also ensures that most, if not all, readers who don't play are also acquainted with the jargon).

Obviously, though, it is sensible to abbreviate by using some combination of letters more or less approaching the original, and here's where we get into possible trouble with the various areas beginning with the letter N. Also, but with less possible confusion, with Tyrol and the Tyrrhenian Sea.

However there's no deep reason why I use the abbreviations I do - they fulfil their function and that's the important part, at least as far as all the player and the majority (at least) of the readers. I do, however, attempt to distinguish between spaces in another way - by referring to sea spaces in upper case, while land provinces get an Upper Case first letter and a lower case second and third. There are exceptions of course - StP for St. Petersburg for instance. However, in general, there seems to be little, if any, source of confusion.

It is some time since I put anything more than 'underlined moves fail' in the 'Notation' sections of the game reports, so I will print, on the next page, a list of the abbreviations I use.

However I don't see any reason to change this - different gamesmasters and editors use different notations, and it's not all that hard for players and others to get used to it, since most of them are blindingly obvious anyway. With the greatest of respect to LA GUERRE, we'll stick by our methods.

ALBION abbreviations for spaces in Diplomacy games (regular).

Adriatic Sea	ADS	Aegean Sea	AES
Albania	Alb	Ankara	Ank
Apulia	Apu	Armenia	Arm
Baltic Sea	BAL	Barents Sea	BAS
Belgium	Bel	Berlin	Ber
Black Sea	BIA	Bohemia	Boh
Brest	Bre	Budapest	Bud
Bulgaria	Bul	Burgandy	Bur
Clyde	Cly	Constantinople	Con
Denmark	Den	Eastern Mediterranean	EMS
Edinburgh	Edi	English Channel	ENC
Finland	Fin	Galicia	Gal
Gascony	Gas	Greece	Gre
Gulf of Bothnia	GoB	Gulf of Lyons	GoL
Heligoland	HEL	Holland	Hol
Ionian Sea	IOS	Irish Sea	IRI
Kiel	Kie	Liverpool	Lpl
Livonia	Liv	London	Lon
Marseilles	Mar	Mid Atlantic	MAO
Moscow	Mos	Munich	Mun
Naples	Nap	North Africa	NAf
North Atlantic	NAO	North Sea	NTH
Norwegian Sea	NWG	Paris	Par
Picardy	Pic	Piedmont	Pie
Portugal	Por	Prussia	Pru
Rome	Rom	Ruhr	Ruh
Rumania	Rum	Serbia	Ser
Sevastopol	Sev	Silesia	Sil
Skaggerak	Ska	Smyrna	Smy
Spain	Spa	St. Petersburg	StP
Sweden	Swe	Syria	Syr
Trieste	Tri	Tunis	Tun
Tuscany	Tus	Tyrol	Tyr
Tyrrhenian Sea	TYS	Ukraine	Ukr
Venice	Ven	Vienna	Vie
Wales	Wal	Warsaw	War
Western Med.	WMS	Yorkshire	Yor

As I said on the last page, there are a few exceptions to the general rule that 'upper case means sea' - Ska for the Skaggerak, for instance. However it all seems to hold water. (And so does the Skaggerak, come to think of it, but not all that much).

Actually, I think the greatest danger, in a notation which uses lower case letters, is in distinguishing between Pie and Pic, which look pretty alike. However, in this as in almost every other case - in fact I can't think of one offhand - the problem of possible ambiguity can be solved by a little common sense and geography. You just have to look at the board every so often, that's all.

ALBION Trades and Subscribers List.

Correct as at June 16th 1970.

Symbolism:- T = we have a trade agreement.
T? = have we a trade agreement?
TA = we have a trade agreement, copies coming to you by printed matter airmail. Your credit or debit in this respect is indicated in (..)
S = you have the ill-fortune to subscribe to this load of trash; the figures in (..) indicate the last issue you will receive unless you renew the subscription.
P = you are unfortunate enough to have to suffer my gamesmastering as well as the rest of the tripe in here; the figures in *..* indicate the last issue for which you have paid postage.
A = you are either Allan Calhamer or Jim Dunnigan; you still have to read this nonsense, but at least you get it free.

1. Michael Nethercot, 20 Moray Close, Rise Park, Romford, Essex. P. *56*
2. Malcolm Watson, 3 Hawthorn Avenue, Timperley, Cheshire. P and gamesmaster for 70/3. *N/A*
3. Colin Newcombe, 115 Longdown Road, Congleton, Cheshire. P. *N/A*
4. John Robertson, Upper Dunglass, Arbroath Road, Broughty Ferry, Dundee DD5 1QN. P. *32*
5. Chris Hancock, 17 Mallard Road, Chelmsford, Essex. P. *17!!!*
6. David Wood, 60 Woodgate Avenue, Church Lawton, Stoke on Trent ST7 3EF, Staffs. P. *22*
7. Rod Walker, 5058 Hawley Boulevard, San Diego, California 92116. TA (\$2)
8. John McCallum, P.O.Box 52, Ralston, Alberta, Canada. T.
9. Jeff Key, 4611 N. Pennsylvania, Apt. 1-D, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73112. T?
10. Dick Holcombe, 45 Kimberlin Heights Drive, Oakland, California 94619. TA (-\$1.17)
11. Ray Evans, 12 Mareth Road, Bedford, Bedfordshire. P. *29 plus 2d*
12. Bob Johnson, P.O.Box 134, Whippany, New Jersey 07981. TA? (?)
13. Don Miller, 12315 Judson Road, Wheaton, Maryland 20906. T.
14. Bob Thomas, 155 Coxford Road, Shirley Warren, Southampton SO1 6JX, Hants. P. *27*
15. Bob Stuart, 3 Millwood Road, Orpington, Kent. P. *34 plus 4d*
16. Eric Slack, 26 Hartcroft Road, Bestwood Park Estate, Nottingham NG5 5JF. S. (27 plus 10d).

17. Sheila Minion, 7 Beeley Close, Allestree, Derby DE3 2PY.
S. (19 plus 1/6d)
18. Charles Wells, 3021 Washington Boulevard, Cleveland,
Ohio 44118. S. (17 plus 15/11)
19. Terry Kuch, 7554 Spring Lake Drive, Bethesda Maryland
20034. T.
20. Larry Fong, 704 Alice Street, Oakland, California 94607.
S. (14!!!)
21. Edi Birsan, 48-20 39th Street, Long Island City, New
York 11104. P. *18 plus 94/4*
22. Bill Heim, P.O.Box 281, Mount Eden, California 94557.
S. (30 plus 25/4)
23. John Lilley, 33 Brooklands Way, Redhill, Surrey.
S. (19 plus 6d)
24. Buddy Tretick, 3702 Wendy Lane, Silver Spring, Maryland
20906. P. *17!!!*
25. Fred Davis, 5307 Carriage Court, Baltimore, Maryland
21229. S. (25)
26. Richard Redd, K'vutzat Urim, Doar Na Negev, Israel.
P. *35 plus 3/10d, with Abstraction game fee also
credited*
27. Rod Blackshaw, 24 Oak Cottages, Styal, Wilmslow,
Cheshire. S. (20)
28. Bernie Ackerman, P.O.Box 6, Daggafontein, Transvaal,
South Africa. P. *19 plus 4d, with Abstraction game
fee also credited*
29. David Jones, 4/58 Deveron Drive, Tilehurst, Reading,
Berkshire. P. *26*
30. Allan Calhamer, 321 W. Calendar Avenue, Kensington
Apts. 2E, La Grange, Illinois 60525. A.
31. Jim Dunnigan, Poultron Press, Box 396, New York City,
New York 10009. A.
32. Tony Jones, 32 Saxon Close, East Preston, Near Worthing,
Sussex. S. (25)

One or two of you - please note the gloomy !! appearing after your name. This means you owe me some cash. Those in this category who wish to pay direct to me - fine; however those who live in the USA might prefer to send some cash to Bob Johnson on my behalf (number 12 above), as long as said cash arrives before July 20th. After that, direct to me please, unless it's very inconvenient, in which case please let me know your problem.

Those who live in the USA (with the exception of players in 70/3) will be glad to know that your cash is going to last a bit longer than expected. This issue of ALBION and the next will be mailed to you from the US in mid-July; this not only allows it to reach your hands earlier than via the mails, but also cuts postage cost a bit. Those getting ALBION by air will still do so, of course, although I might be tempted to bring issue 19 over with me, with no difference in timing.

GAME THEORY.

Part 14. 3x3 games re-visited.

It's about time I kept my promise to you about some real-life-type examples of 3x3 games. So here goes.

Example 20. Pre-Election Travail.

You all know that the present British Government, tactless to the last, have decided, much to their own disadvantage, to hold a General Election, the date to coincide approximately with the publication of this issue of ALBION. Although the release of this magazine will do much to demote election news to the back of the mind of the average Englishman, at least it gives us an opportunity of inventing a political-type problem.

Please note that I will deliberately make the bones of the problem inaccurate; hence it's no good your trying to deduce my personal political affiliations (as if I had any!) from the example.

Anyway, our story concerns Eustace Bagshawe, a well-known high financier who is reputed to be so knowledgeable about stock-market dealings that he is in constant danger of being choked by his debentures. The Election looming imminent, he turns his not inconsiderable mind to the best way of making cash out of it, by investing in suitable stocks before the result, and buying three more wives, in rapid succession, with the profits afterwards.

His investigations take him some time, but he eventually emerges from his study with the following conclusions:- He has but £50,000 to invest in the venture (he should have had more, but his wine-merchant needed paying). With this cash he could buy three stocks, the expected profit/loss of each being influenced in a significant way by the results of the election. Tabulating these in a familiar matrix form, the results look like this:-

Stocks	Party obtaining absolute majority:-		
	Conservative	Labour	No-one.
Egg Marketing Ltd.	8,000	-4,000	3,000
Mudslingers Associated	1,000	5,000	2,000
Strikers Anonymous	-4,000	2,000	4,000

The payoffs are in £, and represent the amount Eustace stood to win (or lose) depending on the outcome of the voting (that's assuming anyone bothers to turn up for the polls). Of course, it would have made the matrix easier had I made the payoffs in thousands of £, but that's just to confuse you.

Quite a nice little haul, in most circumstances, considering Eustace will make this killing in a mere few days.

No saddle point, and no dominance, so we form the two matrices from which to calculate the mixture. This time I will work in £1,000 units.

Eustace's matrix is:-

12	-5
-4	3
-11	3

Hence the rather alarming result 21:19:16.

We are, of course, interested in the matrix and strategy of the other 'player', since we need this to check the results anyway. This turns out to be:-

7	-9	-1
5	-2	-2

from which we get the results 16:9:31.

Checking: Eustace's mixture against Nature 1 gives $\frac{123}{56}$
 against Nature 2 gives $\frac{123}{56}$
 against Nature 3 gives $\frac{123}{56}$

A quick check will confirm that the same result is obtained the other way round.

So we have solved Eustace's problem for him, although the results are, so say the least, rather inconvenient. But that's life, as you all know.

The payoff to Eustace, or value of the game, being in units of £1,000, his expected gain by playing game theory should be

$$£1,000 \times \frac{123}{56} = £2,197 \text{ approximately.}$$

Not a bad return for a bit of thought.

Of course, there are at least two ways of looking at the result. If we treat the game as strictly a one-off affair (which it is, really), then the argument should be that Eustace should invest his capital in Egg Marketing Ltd., which has the largest figure associated with it in the result for Eustace (21). However this wouldn't give him the £2,197 profit - the profit would be governed totally by the result, and could swing between £8,000 and -£4,000, depending on the result. You might suspect that this is no way to treat a game theory analysis, and you would be right. This is merely 'playing the odds', and any self-respecting Eustace could do this without going into all the game theory calculations in the first place.

The better method should remind you of a certain gentleman who trades in miscellaneous merchandise outside Manchester United football ground. The fact is that the game we have so prominently displayed in matrix form above is one of an infinite series of games, all deducible from the given conditions. It isn't necessary for you to deduce them all, by the way, so don't put this down now.

In fact, if you cast your mind back to Manchester United, you might notice that we did something there which seemed totally at odds with what we were advising you to do - in other words, in the final result, we allowed Arthur (the broken bottle merchant) to play a bit of this strategy and a bit of that, instead of sticking to the principle that he should play one strategy for each trial of the game, and determine which strategy that should be by some chance device.

However, when it comes to investing money, either in eggs to be thrown at politicians, or bottles to throw at referees, it seems clear that there is a slightly different principle in operation. For example, we haven't formulated the game in which Eustace invests one third of his capital in each stock, or half in one and a quarter in each of the others, etc. In other words, taking into account the infinite number of ways in which he could invest his fortune, we have't set up an infinite game, but a remarkably finite one. It therefore seems clear (and this is justified in practice, I assure you) that we can, in these rare instances, interpret a physical mixture of strategies as an actual mixed decision in regards the proportions to invest in the various stocks.

You may not have followed the above argument, and I must confess it doesn't seem all too plain to me. To go into it fully would take more room than ALBION can ever offer, let alone in one issue; the explanation is without doubt beyond my capacity anyway. So you'll just have to take it from me, aided, I hope, by a bit of intuition.

Anyway, back to the problem and the interpretation of the result. Since Eustace gets the result 21:19:16, we first work out the sum of these numbers (56), then apportion his investments in accordance with the mixed strategy. Thus, he should invest:-

$\frac{21}{56}$ ths of his capital in Egg Marketing, $\frac{19}{56}$ ths in Mudslingers, and the rest in Strikers Anonymous.

These figures work out at:- £18,750 in Eggs.
£16,965 in Mudslingers.
£14,285 in Strikers.

These investments should assure him the profit stated above, if there's any justice in this world. Of course, the situation might be different if he had some information which gave him a clear idea as to who was going to win, but that's another story.....

On to another example, this one being inspired by the recent announcement of the opening of the coarse fishing season. Being a non-angler myself, I have often wondered at the expression 'coarse fishing', picturing in my mind a set of rough hard anglers standing on the bank of some river and so offending the fish therein with foul language that they leap out into the landing nets in protest. Or are coarse fish the ones that must be eaten out of a newspaper? I don't know, and it's not really germane to the problem anyway, so no more time-wasting.

Example 21. The Coarse Angler.

Our story concerns a bright young roach (*Rutilus rutilus*) who, in addition to doing all the things a roach usually does (and probably things a roach shouldn't do besides) has applied himself to the study of game theory in careful preparation for the season to start. He is aware of the following facts:-

1. He eats only three things - insects, fresh-water shrimps and maggots; he can therefore expect anglers to employ baits of these types.
2. In a random sample survey of the population of his particular area of river, he knows that there are 3 times as many insects as maggots, and four times as many maggots as shrimps. This evidence he can construe into the lethalities of the various baits - in other words, if he sees a fat shrimp hanging around he is going to think rather carefully before eating it, since shrimp is relatively rare under normal conditions.
3. The angler standing on the bank at this precise moment is probably unaware of game theory - he is a coarse fisherman, as we have already said.

Rutilus prepares himself for a spot of analysis, and reasons thus:-

"The lethality of any one particular bait will be in inverse proportion to the population of that bait which occurs here naturally. Thus, let's say the proportion of insects: maggots: shrimps is as 12:4:1; then the lethalities of the bait types will be as the reciprocals of these numbers, i.e.

$$\frac{1}{12} : \frac{1}{4} : \frac{1}{1}$$

However no self-respecting *Rutilus rutilus* would have these nasty fractions around, so let's multiply each by 12, getting a lethality ratio of 1:3:12. To explain this more fully, for the benefit of any reader of my biography who doesn't yet see the argument, I reckon it will be ~~three~~ times safer to feed on insects as to feed on maggots. Let me now have a look at my matrix:-

(No room for the matrix on this page, but one is forced to admit that friend Ruty is quite a cute little fish, and remarkably well brought-up.)

Angler uses as bait:-

		Insects	Maggots	Shrimps
I pick to eat:-	Insects	-1	0	0
	Maggots	0	-3	0
	Shrimps	0	0	-12

So let's have a look and see how best to survive."

You will notice that Ruty has sensibly made the payoffs negative, since he is the one interested in staying alive. Ruty's analysis takes the following form:-

1. No saddle point.
2. No dominance.
3. Form the 3x2 matrix from which to find the results for Ruty, as follows:-

-1	0
3	-3
0	12

Result - Ruty plays 36:12:3, or 12:4:1.

A look at the 3x2 matrix for the angler will show you that he plays the same ratio.

The solution, therefore, is that, in every 17 foods Ruty finds, he must, in the long run, eat only 1 shrimp and 4 maggots, whereas insects are relatively safe. The value of the game, which should be checked in the usual way, of course, turns out to be $-12/17$; in other words, the game is unfair and biased towards the angler, which is one good reason for having coarse fishing seasons, I would imagine. However, the value of the game is better for the fish than any one individual non-zero result in the original matrix, so he has benefited from his knowledge. If he were to gobble down food indiscriminately, he wouldn't last long, as you can quickly confirm from the above.

This ends our look at 3x3 examples for the time being; however, don't bewail the fact that I am going on to even larger games now, since I'm not. It so happens that there are a lot of 3x3 games which won't yield even to the analysis above, and we will be spending quite some time on these. In fact, the 3x3 game is the first really difficult type of game you deal with - the 2xm games present no problems of like calibre, and, once you have got the hang of all the 3x3 techniques, you aren't going to need anything new for larger games, at least nothing fundamental.

So there's a bit of encouragement for you. You need it, to judge by the total lack of response to the homework.....
Prof. Erasmus Thing.

Test Series Games Miscellany.

First, I should announce that the review on Flying Fortress II, which was due to appear in this issue, has got delayed, and will go into issue 19. Apologies for this, but it can't be helped.

Second, Jim Dunnigan has kindly supplied me with comments on the points raised in the Barbarossa report, which are given below:-

1. River squares are subject to the 'standard' definition - i.e. the river must pass through two sides of the square. I imagine this is one way of adjusting play-balance, if anyone wishes to try it; treat anything with a bit of river as a river square if you want to give the German an extra disadvantage (I can't think why, since they suffer enough already).
2. Marshes should double the defender the same as mountains.
3. Partial squares are not to be used. Again, I think play-balance could be affected by the use of partial squares: however there's quite a lot to recommend it, if anyone wants to try, since the use of partial squares would give an extra, but marginal, advantage to the German, and he sure needs all he can get.
4. LW units attack with their attack factor and defend with their defence factor when used in combination with other units. They only suffer loss ~~when attacked and retreated~~ by adjacent Russian units. They can attack and defend in the same turn.
5. The correct dates for the Tank and Assault Armies are on the back of the campaign game sheet.
6. A Russian 2-1-5 can prevent the retreat of a German 11-8-8 in the Russian turn, without being over-run. The point here, I would imagine, is that the Germans would not be organised as a fighting force when displaced by a successful Russian attack, and hence would be in no condition to over-run anything.
7. Only the actual German units reduce movement in winter; the Italians plod on as normal (they can't move much at any time, as it happens).
8. Winter doesn't affect the railroad bonus. OK, Jim - I stand corrected.
9. The narrows are to be considered as another river, and can be crossed and/or used for supply. Again, we guessed wrong on this point.

Thanks for the comments, Jim.

Please note, at this point, that articles on games are very welcome to ALBION. Get writing.

Quick Flash on ALBION 70/3.

The Boardman number for this game is 1970AK.

REPORT.

ALBION 69/1 (1969BG).

Autumn 1909.

Apologies to the Turkish commander, whose A(Gre) was omitted in error from the last report.

Austria (Nethercot);	<u>A(Tri)-Ven.</u>	<u>A(Boh)-Mun.</u>
	<u>A(Gal)-Sil.</u>	<u>A(Tyr) S A(Boh)-Mun.</u>
France (Watson);	<u>F(BAS)-StP-NC.</u>	F(Swe)-GoB.
	<u>F(Nor)-Swe.</u>	F(NWG)-NTH.
	F(IOUS) stands.	F(TYS) S F(IOUS).
	F(Apu)-ADS.	A(Bel) stands.
	A(Fin) S F(Nor)-Swe.	
	A(Ruh) S German A(Mun).	
	A(Bur) S German A(Mun).	
	<u>A(Pie)-Tyr.</u>	<u>A(Ven) S A(Pie)-Tyr.</u>
	A(Tus) & A(Ven).	
Germany (Newcombe);	<u>F(BAL)-Swe.</u>	A(Pru)-Ber.
	F(Den) S F(BAL)-Swe.	A(Mun) stands.
	<u>A(Sil) S A(Mun).</u>	
Russia (Hancock);	F(StP-NC) stands.	A(Liv) stands.
<u>No orders received.</u>	A(Mos) stands.	A(War) stands.
Turkey (Wood);	A(Alb)-Ser.	A(Bul)-Rum.
	<u>F(AES)-IOS.</u>	A(Gre) stands.
	F(EMS) S F(AES)-IOS.	

Retreats:- none.

Notation:- underlined moves fail. S = supports.

Builds.

Austria controls:	Vie, Tri, Bud, Ser, Mun.	Removes 1 for 3.
France controls:	Par, Bre, Mar, Por, Bel, Spa, Lon, Lpl, Edi, Nap, Tun, Rom, Nor, Swe, Ven.	Builds 1 for 15.
Germany controls:	Ber, Kie, Mun, Den, Hol.	No change for 5.
Russia controls:	Mos, War, StP, Sev, Rum.	No change for 4.
Turkey controls:	Ank, Smy, Con, Gre, Bul, Ser, Rum.	Builds 2 for 7.

DEADLINE for Winter 1909 builds etc. is:-

Wednesday July 1st.

Sorry time is so short - my holidays are dictating the deadline!

Press Release from the Austrian Press.

The last fling of a once proud and mighty Empire!

Prince Buda is dead - Long Live the Republic!

REPORT.ALBION 69/2 (1969CF).Autumn 1905.

Austria (Wood);	<u>A(Bud)-Rum.</u>	<u>A(Vie)-Bud.</u>
England (Hancock);	<u>F(Bel) stands.</u>	
No orders received.		
France (Evans);	A(Bur)-Bel.	A(Wal)-Lon.
	A(Mar)-Bur.	<u>F(Pie)-Tus.</u>
	F(ENC) S A(Bur)-Bel.	<u>F(WMS)-TYS.</u>
	<u>F(GoL) S F(WMS)-TYS.</u>	
	F(Tun) S F(WMS)-TYS.	
Germany (Stuart);	F(Swe)-GoB.	F(NTH) S A(Hol).
	A(Hol) stands.	<u>A(Kie)-Pru.</u>
	<u>A(Boh)-Vie.</u>	A(Mos)-War.
	A(Tyr) S A(Boh)-Vie.	
Italy (Watson);	<u>F(Tus)-GoL.</u>	<u>F(TYS) S F(Tus).</u>
	F(Nap) S F(TYS).	F(AES)-IOS.
	<u>F(Gre)-Bul.</u>	<u>F(Con)-Ank.</u>
	A(Ven) S A(Tri).	A(Tri) S Austrian A(Vie).
	A(Ser) S Russian A(Gal)-Bud.	
Russia (Robertson);	F(BAL)-Den.	<u>A(StP)-Nor.</u>
	A(War)-Sil.	A(Gal)-Bud.
	<u>F(Bul)-Rum.</u>	
Turkey (Thomas);	F(Ank) stands.	
No orders received.		

Retreats: The English F(Bel) is retreated to Pic.
 The Austrian A(Bud) has no place to go, and is
 eliminated. (Don't forget the stand-off in
 Rumania).

Notation: underlined moves fail.

Builds.

Austria controls:	Bud , Vie, Bel .	No change for 1.
England controls:	Bel .	Eliminated.
France controls:	Par, Mar, Bre, Bel, Por, Spa, Lon, Lpl, Tun.	Builds 1 for 9.
Germany controls:	Ber, Mun, Kie, Den , Nor , Swe, Edi, Hol, War.	No change for 7.
Italy controls:	Ven, Rom, Nap, Tus , Smy, Con, Gre, Tri, Ser.	Removes 1 for 8.
Russia controls:	Mos, StP , Sev, StP, Rum, Den, Nor, Bul, Bud.	Builds 3 for 8.
Turkey controls:	Ank.	No change for 1.

DEADLINE for the winter 1905 builds is:-
Tuesday July 2nd 1970.

ALBION 2



The
From
Bird

BOING